

AMENDMENT TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 8, line 20 and ending on page 9, line 6 as follows:

As shown, the slider body includes stepped bearing surfaces 250 and 252 elevated above the recessed bearing surface 232 and below raised bearing surfaces 230, 234 to provide a stepped interface to the raised bearing surfaces 230, 234. Stepped bearing surface 250 extends from the leading edge portion 160 and is contoured to have a narrow stepped cross width profile proximate to a leading edge stepped portion 254 and an expanded stepped cross width profile portions 256 along the intermediate nodal portion. In particular, portions 256 of the stepped bearing surface 250 has ~~ave diamond~~ triangular shaped stepped profiles which includes an outwardly and inwardly sloped profile along the intermediate nodal portion to provide a contoured stepped cross width profile surface to limit off-nodal pressurization. Stepped bearing surface 252 has a narrow stepped cross width profile in the embodiment shown.